

S M -291  
DYSON HOUSE  
Bushwood  
Private

1900

This handsome, two-story frame house with a principal facade of three bays was built by a successful black farmer, Isaac Dyson, in 1900. His son Clem continues to live here and has enlarged and improved the family home. Outbuildings include a corn crib, a fifteen-room tobacco house and a stable converted into a tobacco house.

S' M. - 29/  
The Dyson House  
Bushwood  
Private

C.1900

This handsome two story frame house was built by Isaac Dyson, the father of the present occupant, soon after purchasing the property. The house consisted of three rooms downstairs -- sitting room, bedroom, and kitchen -- and two upstairs, this plan being typical of houses of small land-owning black families in the late 19th century. A number of outbuildings remain on the site.

## MARYLAND HISTORICAL TRUST

SM - 291  
MAGI #1902915604

## INVENTORY FORM FOR STATE HISTORIC SITES SURVEY

**1 NAME**

HISTORIC

JOHN C. DYSON HOUSE

AND/OR COMMON

**2 LOCATION**

STREET &amp; NUMBER

South side of Bushwood City Rd.  
(Now Maddox Road, MD 238)

CITY, TOWN

Bushwood

VICINITY OF

CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

7

STATE

Maryland

COUNTY

St. Mary's

**3 CLASSIFICATION****CATEGORY**☐ DISTRICT  
☒ BUILDING(S)  
☐ STRUCTURE  
☐ SITE  
☐ OBJECT**OWNERSHIP**☐ PUBLIC  
☒ PRIVATE  
☐ BOTH  
**PUBLIC ACQUISITION**  
☐ IN PROCESS  
☐ BEING CONSIDERED**STATUS**☒ OCCUPIED  
☐ UNOCCUPIED  
☐ WORK IN PROGRESS  
**ACCESSIBLE**  
☒ YES: RESTRICTED  
☐ YES: UNRESTRICTED  
☐ NO**PRESENT USE**☐ AGRICULTURE  
☐ COMMERCIAL  
☐ EDUCATIONAL  
☐ ENTERTAINMENT  
☐ GOVERNMENT  
☐ INDUSTRIAL  
☐ MILITARY  
☐ MUSEUM  
☐ PARK  
☒ PRIVATE RESIDENCE  
☐ RELIGIOUS  
☐ SCIENTIFIC  
☐ TRANSPORTATION  
☐ OTHER**4 OWNER OF PROPERTY**

NAME

John Clements Dyson

Telephone #: 769-3750

STREET &amp; NUMBER

Bushwood City Rd.

CITY, TOWN

Bushwood

VICINITY OF

STATE, zip code

Md. 30618

**5 LOCATION OF LEGAL DESCRIPTION**COURTHOUSE,  
REGISTRY OF DEEDS, ETC.

St. Mary's County Courthouse

Map 30 P. 68  
Liber #: JMM 9/112  
Folio #: CBG 16/409

STREET &amp; NUMBER

CITY, TOWN

Leonardtown, Md.

STATE

**6 REPRESENTATION IN EXISTING SURVEYS**

TITLE

NONE

DATE

☐ FEDERAL ☐ STATE ☐ COUNTY ☐ LOCALDEPOSITORY FOR  
SURVEY RECORDS

CITY, TOWN

STATE

## 7 DESCRIPTION

SM-291

### CONDITION

☐ EXCELLENT  
☒ GOOD  
☐ FAIR

☐ DETERIORATED  
☐ RUINS  
☐ UNEXPOSED

### CHECK ONE

☐ UNALTERED  
☒ ALTERED

### CHECK ONE

☒ ORIGINAL SITE  
☐ MOVED DATE \_\_\_\_\_

### DESCRIBE THE PRESENT AND ORIGINAL (IF KNOWN) PHYSICAL APPEARANCE

This handsome two story house stands atop a knoll facing west towards the Bushwood City Rd. The grounds in front of it are well-kept, and made attractive with flower and shrub plantings. Behind the house and to the south are several outbuildings, including a corn crib, a 15 room tobacco barn, and a stable now converted into a tabacco barn. These remain from earlier years when the place was a working farm. Today its owner, John C. Dyson, has retired from farming, though some acreage continues to be cultivated in to bacco, and a vegetable garden maintained.

The facade of the house consists of a principal block, three bays in length, and a kitchen attached to the northern gable end. This extension was originally one story in height, but has been raised recently to two, according to the owner. The roof line is accented by a gable pediment with double-hung sash window within. Originally the roof was covered with wood shingles, according to Dyson, but is now protected by tin.

According to the description provided by Mr. Dyson, the skeleton probably is balloon frame. It was covered originally with pine weatherboards, and has been recently sheathed with white aluminum siding that resembles wide weatherboards. This has been placed on the front and gable ends. The rear length is covered with (lower status) tar paper siding designed to resemble red bricks. Probably this preceded the aluminum siding on the front and gable ends. These different claddings illustrate the typology of siding available to many ordinary farm houses in the 20th century.

The interior plan is a hall and chamber design. The front door opens into the "hall" used as the sitting room. This is the larger of the two principal rooms downstairs. To the south is the smaller "chamber", which serves as the bedroom for Mr. Dyson. A boxed staircase ascends the southeast corner of this block and leads up to the two rooms upstairs. The kitchen on the opposite gable end has been raised to two full stories, creating another (third) room for sleeping quarters above it.

The walls of interior were originally lathed and plastered according to Mr. Dyson. Today they are covered with sheetrock or in the more socially important areas downstairs, covered with synthetic pine panelling, an interesting return in fashion to the "natural" appearance of materials that the lathing and plastering had earlier been used to mask.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**8 SIGNIFICANCE**

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES      c. 1900      BUILDER/ARCHITECT      Black History

**STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE**

According to Mr. Dyson, who was born in 1890, this house was built by his father Isaac when he was "about 10 years old" (c.1900). This was soon after his father had purchased the land. According to Dyson, his father was one of the first men, if not the first, to clear the land and develop a farm along this road, which had been used until that time only as a logging road.

The principal features of this house--its construction (balloon frame) and its design (hall and chamber with attached kitchen on gable end)--resemble those of the houses built by black watermen/landowners in the Abell community nearby or at Beachville further down the Potomac. All of these houses serve as counterpoint to the smaller, one or two room, log or frame houses occupied by tenant farmers of the same period.

The significance of this particular house is that the Dyson family were, and still are, leading members of the black community in this area of St. Mary's County. They have been instrumental in founding schools, businesses, social organizations, and churches, some of which are listed in this survey. Examples are the Love and Charity Society and the Abell School.

Furthermore, the Dysons are valuable oral informants. Before becoming landowners, the Dysons were tenant farmers at nearby Blair's Purchase, SOM-125A.

In fact, Mr. Dyson was born in the log house there, which has been recorded as part of this survey. He is, therefore, an excellent oral informant, knowledgeable about the history of the county, especially in regard to 19th century houses and to the development of institutions within the black community--institutions such as schools, churches, burial insurance groups, fraternal orders, and other social organizations. Another resource in the family is his daughter Josephine, who has been the cook at Blair's Purchase for many years. She knows

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

ORGANIZATION

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

TELEPHONE

CITY OR TOWN

STATE

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature, to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 Supplement.

The Survey and Inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

RETURN TO: Maryland Historical Trust  
The Shaw House, 21 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
(301) 267-1438

PERIOD		AREAS OF SIGNIFICANCE -- CHECK AND JUSTIFY BELOW			
<input type="checkbox"/> HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-PREHISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNITY PLANNING	<input type="checkbox"/> LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> RELIGION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHEOLOGY-HISTORIC	<input type="checkbox"/> CONSERVATION	<input type="checkbox"/> LAW	<input type="checkbox"/> SCIENCE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> AGRICULTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> ECONOMICS	<input type="checkbox"/> LITERATURE	<input type="checkbox"/> SCULPTURE	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> ARCHITECTURE	<input type="checkbox"/> EDUCATION	<input type="checkbox"/> MILITARY	<input type="checkbox"/> SOCIAL/HUMANITARIAN	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> ART	<input type="checkbox"/> ENGINEERING	<input type="checkbox"/> MUSIC	<input type="checkbox"/> THEATER	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMERCE	<input type="checkbox"/> EXPLORATION/SETTLEMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> PHILOSOPHY	<input type="checkbox"/> TRANSPORTATION	
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> COMMUNICATIONS	<input type="checkbox"/> INDUSTRY	<input type="checkbox"/> POLITICS/GOVERNMENT	<input type="checkbox"/> OTHER (SPECIFY)	
		<input type="checkbox"/> INVENTION			

SPECIFIC DATES

BUILDER/ARCHITECT

STATEMENT OF SIGNIFICANCE

(continued)

the traditions of cooking, quilting, and other crafts, which have been passed down in her family, and she has added to that tradition secrets of her own. The result is that she has scrapbooks and wall hangings covered by ribbons (many of them blue) that she has won at county fairs and other contests. According to her, though, she just follows the cookbook or sewing directions.

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**9 MAJOR BIBLIOGRAPHICAL REFERENCES**

SM-291

CONTINUE ON SEPARATE SHEET IF NECESSARY

**10 GEOGRAPHICAL DATA**

ACREAGE OF NOMINATED PROPERTY \_\_\_\_\_

VERBAL BOUNDARY DESCRIPTION

LIST ALL STATES AND COUNTIES FOR PROPERTIES OVERLAPPING STATE OR COUNTY BOUNDARIES

STATE

COUNTY

STATE

COUNTY

**11 FORM PREPARED BY**

NAME / TITLE

George W. McDaniel, Historic Sites Surveyor

ORGANIZATION

Md. Commission on Afro-American History &amp; Culture

DATE

STREET &amp; NUMBER

20 Dean Street

TELEPHONE

269-2893

CITY OR TOWN

Annapolis, Md.

STATE

21401

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P.157

John Dyson House  
STMA 291

Bushwood, Md.

WEST facade

GWM 6/77



John Dyson House  
STMA 291  
Bushwood, Md.  
South Elevation  
GWM - 6/77



50774  
Clem Dyson Field

STMA -

Bushwood, and

5/77

GWM

S View